

THE EXALTATION OF ISLAMIC CIVILISATION AND NOSTALGIA FOR THE PAST IN MUHAMMAD IQBAL'S GABRIEL'S WING

*Muhammed İqbal'in Cebrail'in Kanadı Adlı Eserinde
İslam Medeniyetinin Yüceltilmesi ve Geçmişe Özlem*

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ABSTRACT: In this study, Muhammad Iqbal's work Gabriel's Wing, by one of the leading poets and thinkers of the modern Islamic world, has been subjected to a comprehensive textual analysis in the context of his views on Islamic civilisation and the historical development of Muslims. Iqbal's work reflects his deep longing for the brilliant periods of Muslims in the fields of science, philosophy, art and ethics in the past, while also focusing on the spiritual and political leaders of that era, their understanding of justice-based governance and their human-centred approach. The poet yearns for the revival of the spirit of powerful states that served Islam, such as the Ghaznavids and Seljuks. He extols the universal sources of inspiration of Islam through architectural masterpieces such as the Great Mosque of Córdoba in Andalusia. Iqbal believes that this cultural and intellectual heritage should be a source of awakening and inspiration for contemporary Muslim communities. According to him, Muslims should learn from their historical heritage to break free from inertia and passivity, and adopt a dynamic, innovative stance rooted in spiritual values in the face of the challenges of the modern world. The poet, who states that Islamic civilisation transcended its own boundaries to bring knowledge and enlightenment to the world, also highlights the influence of Muslim scientists in the fields of astronomy, philosophy, mathematics, medicine and art in medieval Europe in this work. The poet advised young people not to be stagnant, but to constantly develop themselves in fields such as science, politics and art, as Islamic scholars and states did in their glorious times in the past. Emphasising that Islam is not merely a belief system but also represents submission, resistance and sacrifice, Muhammad Iqbal draws attention through his poems to the fact that being compassionate, merciful and tolerant is a transformation created by Islam within the individual's inner world. This study approaches Iqbal's work Gabriel's Wing not merely as an aesthetic collection of poetry, but as a text that serves as a powerful call for Muslim societies to rediscover their core values and take on an active role in the modern World.

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ÖZ: Bu çalışmada, modern İslam dünyasının önde gelen şair ve düşünürlerinden Muhammed İkbâl'in Cebrail Kanadı adlı eseri, İslam medeniyeti ve Müslümanların tarihsel gelişimine dair görüşleri bağlamında kapsamlı bir metin analizine tabi tutulmuştur. İkbâl'in bu eseri, Müslümanların geçmişteki bilim, felsefe, sanat ve ahlak alanlarındaki parlak dönemlerine duyduğu derin özlemi yansıtmakta, aynı zamanda o dönemin ruhani ve siyasi liderlerini, adalete dayalı yönetim anlayışını ve insan odaklı yaklaşımını merkeze almaktadır. Şair, Gazneliler ve Selçuklular gibi İslam'a hizmet etmiş güçlü devletlerin ruhunun yeniden canlanmasını arzulamaktadır. Endülüs'teki Kurtuba Camii gibi mimari şaheserler üzerinden İslam'ın evrensel ilham kaynaklarını yüceltmektedir. İkbâl, bu kültürel ve entelektüel mirasın çağdaş Müslüman toplulukları için bir uyanış ve ilham kaynağı olması gerektiğine inanmaktadır. Ona göre, Müslümanlar tarihi miraslarından ders çıkararak ataletten ve pasiflikten kurtulmalı, modern dünyanın zorlukları karşısında dinamik, yenilikçi ve manevi değerlere bağlı bir duruş sergilemelidir. İslam medeniyetinin kendi sınırlarını aşarak dünyaya bilgi aktarımı ve aydınlanma taşıdığını dile getiren şair, Orta Çağ Avrupası'nda Müslüman bilim adamlarının, astronomi, felsefe, matematik, tıp ve sanat alanlarındaki etkilerine de yine bu eserde yer vermiştir. Şair, gençlerin durağan olmamalarını, geçmiş dönem İslam âlimlerinin ve devletlerinin ihtişamlı zamanlarındaki gibi ilim, bilim, siyaset ve sanat gibi alanlarda kendilerini geliştirerek sürekli bir gelişim içerisinde olmalarını öğütlemiştir. İslam'ın yalnızca bir inanç sistemi olmadığını, aynı zamanda teslimiyet, direniş ve fedakârlık olduğunu da vurgulayan Muhammed İkbâl, şiirleri vasıtasıyla şefkatli, merhametli ve hoşgörülü olmanın İslam'ın bireyin iç dünyasında yarattığı bir dönüşüm olduğuna dikkat çekmiştir. Bu çalışma, İkbâl'in Cebrail'in Kanadı eserini, sadece estetik bir şiir koleksiyonu olarak değil, aynı zamanda Müslüman toplumların öz değerlerini yeniden keşfetmeleri ve modern dünyada etkin bir rol üstlenmeleri için güçlü bir çağrı niteliği taşıyan bir metin olarak ele almaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Urdu Dili ve Edebiyatı, Muhammed İkbâl, Cebrail'in Kanadı, İslam Medeniyeti, Geçmiş Özlem

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Introduction

Muhammad Iqbal (1877–1938) was not only a poet but also one of the most influential figures in the modern Islamic world, known for his roles as a thinker, philosopher, and ideologue. His literary works, composed in Urdu and Persian, function not only as aesthetic texts but also as vehicles for social, political and cultural discourse. Iqbal's poetry functioned as a clarion call to awakening for Muslim communities grappling with an identity crisis under colonial rule. In this regard, his works are valuable for remembering the glory of past Islamic civilisation and for understanding his views on the quest for modernisation, spirituality, and freedom among Muslim nations (Cakmakci, 2025: 206). He sought to establish the future of Indian Muslims on sound intellectual foundations, while also producing philosophical views based on Islamic teachings for Muslims worldwide. He is a thinker who

sincerely desires a fundamental reform in Islamic thought and works toward this end (Soydan, 2003: 56). Iqbal, whose reputation in Europe grew in tandem with his intellectual output, expressed his views on Islam at various conferences (Issever, 2024: 245), emphasizing what a true Muslim should be like and the greatness of the Islamic religion.

One of Iqbal's most significant works, *Gabriel's Wing* (Bal-e-Jibril), counsels Muslim individuals to adhere to monotheism, self-assurance, and spirituality, while also asserting that Islam's fundamental tenet is a form of spirituality characterised by purity and rectitude. Moreover, while articulating his yearning for the illustrious era of Islamic civilisation in his poetic compositions, the poet exhorts Muslims to adopt a fresh spiritual and cultural renaissance in response to the predicaments of the contemporary era. Throughout this work, Muhammad Iqbal's messages to Muslim youth are evident. In this work, the poet strives to impart the fundamental principles and ideals of Islam to young people (Kuyumcu, 2011: 84), emphasising the importance of avoiding laziness, preserving spirituality and moral purity, and demonstrating compassion, tolerance, and courage, drawing upon the examples of significant historical figures and spiritual leaders. Iqbal's philosophy is characterised by a yearning for the resurgence of the formidable states that once flourished under the banner of Islam, such as the Ghaznavids and Seljuks. Iqbal's intellectual vision extends beyond mere historical admiration, however, as he also calls upon his fellow Muslims to strive for advancement in the realms of science, art, and spirituality. With regard to the dynamism of Islam, Iqbal emphasised that the ummah should not be static, but rather in constant motion and renewal. Simultaneously, Iqbal alluded to his yearning for the era when Islamic civilisation had reached its zenith in the domains of science, philosophy and thought. In a similar manner, the poet asserted that Islamic civilisation transcended its geographical boundaries, disseminating knowledge and enlightenment on a global scale. This work notably emphasised the profound influence of Muslim intellectuals on various disciplines, including philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and art, particularly during the medieval era in Europe.

The present study employs a qualitative approach based on textual analysis to examine Iqbal's work *Gabriel's Wing* in the context of the glorification of Islamic civilisation, Muslim living standards, and poems evoking nostalgia for the past.

The Exaltation of Islamic Civilization and Nostalgia for the Past in Muhammad Iqbal's Gabriel's Wing

In the following poem, Muhammad Iqbal strengthens his narrative by using the metaphor of the "saqi," which in Sufism often represents divine love and inspiration, and the symbol of "mai" (wine), which symbolizes spiritual ecstasy and the excitement of reaching the truth. The poet conveys his aspiration to adhere to the unadulterated and authentic tenets of Islam, as opposed to seeking counsel from an external source. In this passage the poet conveys his aspiration to maintain fidelity to the unadulterated and primordial tenets of Islam, as opposed to soliciting assistance from a foreign entity. Iqbal, stating that the "mey" that brings purity to human nature is found within Islam (Yezdani, 2005: 59), noted that humble Muslims who follow the path of Sufism would not resort to another way:

I do not seek wine from the سوال مے نہ کروں ساقی فرنگ سے
Western cupbearer,

for this is not the path of Islam's میں کہ بہ طریقہ رندان پاکباز نہیں
righteous followers (Iqbal, 2013: 50).

Muhammad Iqbal, in his poetry, utilised the phrase "lavlake" which is purported to be a sacred hadith (Demirci, 1997: 180), meaning "If you did not exist, I would not have created the universe." This phrase underscores the notion that individuals who are not averse to self-sacrifice in the way of Allah can genuinely attain freedom and a perfected self. He emphasised that such individuals, who are unencumbered by the hypocrisy and deceitfulness forbidden by Islam, possess the highest moral values, defend justice, resist oppression, and are not averse to self-sacrifice in the way of Allah. Iqbal, in reference to the two significant Muslim rulers of the Great Seljuk Empire, Tughrul and Sanjar, observes that these beys governed a vast geographical region in a manner befitting Muslims, and that dervishes, having attained spiritual richness without being deceived by the beauties of the physical world, had no need for worldly positions or wealth, were free because they were devoted only to Allah, and that this freedom was superior even to that of kings. The poet asserted that individuals must possess an unparalleled capacity for comprehension in terms of depth of thought and perspective, akin to the renowned Turkish philosopher Farabi. In addition, it was posited that, in a manner analogous to the Sufi Mavlana Jalaluddin Rumi, a true lover, the dervish manifests himself in burning love and ecstasy (Yezdani, 2005: 106). The author draws parallels between this experience and the

spiritual ecstasy associated with "true faith and love," as exemplified by figures such as Ali, who is widely regarded as a symbol of heroism and courage in Islamic literature. In the context of Iqbal's thought, the Turks are conceptualised as a nation embodying the dynamic spirit of Islam. He asserts that the strength and accomplishments of the Turks do not originate from rational intellect, but rather from profound faith, love, sacrifice, and a fervent aspiration to engage in jihad in the way of God, which is deeply entrenched in their hearts. In this passage, the author emphasises the spiritual superiority of Islam over materialistic Western powers. Furthermore, he asserts that if Muslims are dynamic, consistent, and dedicated, truth will prevail and Islam will flourish:

The whole world is the inheritance of that faithful servant,

جہاں تمام ہے میراثِ مردِ مومن

The proof of my words is the expression Levlak.

کی مرے کلام پہ حجت ہے نکتہ لولاک

That rare pearl is not so easily obtained!

یوں باتھ نہیں آتا، وہ گوہرِ یک دانہ

O manly courage: It must be stability and freedom.

یک رنگی و آزادی اے ہمتِ مردانہ

It must be either Sanjar or Tughrul's universal law,

یا سنجر و طغرل کا آئینِ جہانگیری

Or it must be the style of rule of the ascetic servant.

یا مردِ قلندر کے اندازِ ملوکانہ

Either Farabi's wonder, or Rumi's burning and fitting,

یا حیرتِ فارابی، یا تاب و تبِ رومی

Either wise thought, or Kelim's gravitational pull.

یا فکرِ حکیمانہ، یا جذبِ کلیمانہ

Either cunning intellect or the love of Hz. Ali,

یا عقل کی رُو بایی، یا عشقِ یُدُ اللہی

Either Frankish treachery or the

یا حیلہٴ افرنگی، یا حملہٴ ترکانہ

Turkish-specific move!

Either Islamic law, or the
guardianship of the mandar,

یا شرع مسلمانی، یا دیر کی درباری

Either at the Kaaba or in the idol
house, it should be a drunken cry.

یا نعرۂ مستانہ، کعبہ ہو کہ بت خانہ

In wealth, in poverty, in
kingship or in slavery,

میری میں، فقیری میں، شاہی میں،
غلامی میں

Nothing is gained; it should be
the courage of the dervish (Iqbal,
2013: 81-82).

کچھ کام نہیں بنتا ہے جرأت رندانہ
(Yezdani, 2005: 104-105)

Muhammad Iqbal praised the Great Mosque of Cordoba, one of the finest examples of Islamic architecture in Europe, in the following poem. Travelling from Paris to Spain and Iqbal, who gave numerous lectures entitled 'The Development of Andalusia and Islam,' wrote this poem under the influence of the prayer he performed alone in the Cordoba Mosque (Iqbal, 2010: 17). He expressed the grandeur and aesthetics of the most famous and largest building (Beksac, 2002: 453) of Andalusian religious architecture, pointing to the greatness of Allah and stating that this structure is as durable as date palms. Furthermore, Iqbal, who establishes a connection between the holy lands where Moses received revelation and this structure, views the minaret of the mosque not only from an architectural perspective but also as a symbol of a divine message and the spiritual unity of the ummah:

With your majesty and beauty,
you are a guide to the man of Allah;

تیرا جلال و جمال مرد خدا کی دلیل

He is great and beautiful, and you
are great and beautiful.

وہ بھی جلیل و جمیل تو بھی جلیل و جمیل

Your structure is strong, your
columns are countless,

تیری بنا پائیدار تیرے ستوں بے شمار

You are like a forest of palm trees
in the Syrian desert.

شام کے صحرا میں ہو جیسے ہجوم نخیل

The light of the Sinai Valley is at
your door, on your roof,

تیرے در و بام پر وادی ایمن کا نور

Your high minaret is where
Gabriel reveals himself (Iqbal,
2013: 113).

تیرا منار بلند جلوہ گہ جبرئیل
(Iqbal, 2012: 156)

Muhammad Iqbal, again in his poem on the Mosque of Cordoba, explains that the reason the Islamic ummah will not perish is that the belief in tawhid, which forms the basis of Islam, is rooted in the ancient prophets. He strengthens this argument by citing prophets such as Moses and Abraham, who were pioneers in the chain of tawhid. The poet sees the call to prayer as the voice of this ancient invitation and revelation. He states that the geography of the ummah cannot be confined within specific borders, but is vast and uninterrupted. Referring to three different regions in his poem, Iqbal depicts the geographical spread of Islam across a vast civilisational space stretching from Africa to Asia and Europe. Speaking of the dynamism of Islam, Iqbal emphasised that the ummah should not be static but should be in a state of constant movement and renewal. At the same time, Iqbal pointed to the period when Islamic civilisation was at its peak in the fields of science, philosophy and thought. Stating that the Muslim's greatest protection is the belief in tawhid, the poet emphasised that this belief is more of a spiritual shield than a material armour, and that it was the greatest support during periods of conquest and struggle:

The Islamic nation can never
perish, for

مٹ نہیں سکتا کبھی مرد مسلمان کہ ہے

The secret of Moses and
Abraham lies hidden in its call to
prayer.

اس کی اذانوں سے فاش سر کلیم و خلیل

Its land is boundless, its horizons
endless

اس کی زمین بے حدود اس کا افق بے
تغور

The waves of the Tigris, Nile, and
Dnieper are its seas.

اس کے سمندر کی موج دجلہ و دنیوب و
نیل

Its era is fascinating, its story

اس کے زمانے عجیب اس کے فسانے

astonishing

غریب

Its call to a stagnant age heralds
movement.

عہد کہن کو دیا اس نے پیام رحیل

It is the cupbearer of love, the
horseman of the field of science,

ساقی ارباب ذوق فارس میدان شوق

Its wine is pure, its sword noble
and sharp.

بادہ ہے اس کا رحیق تیغ ہے اس کی اصیل

It is a seasoned warrior; its
armour is La Ilaha,

مرد سپاہی ہے وہ اس کی زرہ لا الہ

In the shadow of swords, its
refuge is La Ilah (Iqbal, 2013: 114).

سایہ شمشیر میں اس کی پنہ لا الہ

(Iqbal, 2012: 156)

In the continuation of his poetic discourse on the Mosque of Cordoba, Iqbal characterized it as the qibla of art and aesthetics, akin to the significance of the Kaaba as the spiritual focal point for Muslims. It was also posited that the mosque in question reflected the splendor, grandeur, and spirituality of the Muslim community. Iqbal further elaborated on the significance of the mosque as a spiritual hub for Muslims, underscoring the profound impact of Andalusian Muslims on global advancement through their contributions to knowledge, art, science, and civilization. Iqbal reiterated the distinctiveness of the mosque and the Muslim heart in this poem:

O Kaaba of the masters of art!
The pride of the believer,

کعبہ ارباب فن سطوت دین مبین

Spanish soil gained the rank of
the Harem through you.

تجھ سے حرم مرتبت اندلسیوں کی زمیں

If there is an equal to your beauty
in this world,

ہے تہ گردوں اگر حسن میں تیری نظیر

It is the Muslim's heart alone;
there is no second (Iqbal, 2013: 115).

قلب مسلمان میں ہے اور نہیں ہے کہیں

(Iqbal, 2012: 156)

In this poem, Muhammad Iqbal conveys a profound yearning for the past, underscoring a decline in spiritual love and fervor. He asserts that individuals devoid of spirituality, love, and knowledge—the very essence of Islam—exist solely in a physical sense, their souls devoid of vitality, akin to a pile of burnt ashes. The poet expresses a longing for the advent of a figure who would revitalize a sense of spirituality in the populace. According to Iqbal, spiritual love represents a transcendent power that elevates humanity beyond its mundane state, enabling individuals to transcend the confines of the earthly realm and soar to ethereal heights through the agency of this divine affection. This section of the poem conveys a profound yearning for the illustrious past of Muslims, a time characterized by opulence and spiritual gratification.:

The fire of love has gone out, and
it's all dark.

بجھی عشق کی آگ اندھیر ہے

No Muslims are left; everything
is just piles of ashes.

مسلمان نہیں راکھ کا ڈھیر ہے

Bring back that old wine, O
cupbearer.

شراب کہن پھر پلا ساقیا

Bring that cup again, O
cupbearer.

وہی جام گردش میں لا ساقیا

Give me your love and carry me
away.

مجھے عشق کے پر لگا کر اڑا

Make me into a firefly and carry
me away.

مری خاک جگنو بنا کر اڑا

Free your thoughts!

خرد کو غلامی سے آزاد کر

Make the young ones the teachers
of the Pir! (Iqbal, 2013: 143).

جوانوں کو پیروں کا استاد کر

(Iqbal, 2012: 214)

The following poem shows what Iqbal thought about selfhood. This poem talks about the amazing mystery of how people are created and all the great things that make each person special. It says that people are more than just their bodies; we also have brains, free will, and spirits. The poet

attributes the reason behind humanity's ability to be a conqueror to the uniqueness of its creation. Iqbal, who says that when people realize their true potential, they can overcome any challenge, disagrees with the idea that there is nothing that can be done to change things:

You are the conqueror of the
world, full of good and evil!

تو بے فاتح عالم خوب و زشت

How can I describe it? Your
creation is magnificent! (Iqbal, 2013:
150).

تجھے کیا بتاؤں تری سر نوشت
(Iqbal, 2012: 217)

Allama Iqbal has expressed dismay at the apparent inability of Muslim youth to recognize the inherent perfection and signs of nature. According to the aforementioned source, young people are unable to develop qualities such as the high courage, self-respect, and will to soar high possessed by a hawk. In Iqbal's conceptualization, the falcon is portrayed as an autonomous entity, characterized by its elevated principles and inclination towards solitude, distancing itself from the company of ordinary and vulnerable avian creatures. However, a falcon raised in a vulture environment remains unaware of the hunting and nobility behaviors that are commensurate with its nature. Iqbal underscores the assertion that the falcon's companionship with crows does not bestow upon the crows the capacity to soar to great heights. On the contrary, this companionship serves to taint the falcon's intrinsic nature (Mahmud, 2018: 142). The poet uses this example to criticize Muslim youth for focusing on ordinary things instead of chasing higher goals. He encourages them to recognize their true potential:

The crow never developed the
ability to fly high.

ہوئی نہ زاغ میں پیدا بلند پروازی

However, the hawk interrupted
the crow's conversation and spoiled
its young.

خراب کر گئی شاہین بچے کو صحبت زاغ

Modesty has vanished from the
eyes of time.

حیا نہیں ہے زمانے کی آنکھ میں باقی

May your youth remain
unblemished, God willing.

خدا کرے کہ جوانی تری رہے بے داغ

Iqbal could not stay in any
khankah.

ٹھہر سکا نہ کسی خانقاہ میں اقبال

For He is sophisticated, honest,
and open-minded (Iqbal, 2013: 133).

کہ ہے ظریف و خوش اندیشہ و شگفتہ
دماغ

(Iqbal, 2012: 201)

In this poem, Muhammad Iqbal expresses his love for fire, even though it destroys the moth. He believes that people should trust themselves and their own existence. They should not give up. The moth and the firefly represent two different ideas. The moth stands for divine love, while the firefly stands for the essence and spiritual power of love. Iqbal also talks about the idea of discovering the light given to people by Allah and recognizing and living up to one's potential:

You are far from the rank of a
moth, O firefly

پروانے کی منزل سے بہت دور ہے جگنو

Why do you take pride in your
fire that does not burn, firefly?

کیوں آتش ہے سوز پہ مغرور ہے جگنو

Thank Allah I am not a moth

اللہ کا سو شکر کہ پروانہ نہیں میں

I am not one who begs for fire
from others (Iqbal, 2013: 132).

دریوزہ گر آتش بیگانہ نہیں میں

(Iqbal, 2012: 200)

Muhammad Iqbal, in this poem imbued with the meanings of becoming intellectually aware, reflecting, and striving to understand, advises the reader to gain a broader perspective and comprehend their surroundings and the universe. He emphasises that humans should step outside their own world and see the infinity and order of the universe created by Allah. What is emphasised here is a kind of search for truth. Similarly, the poet points to the rising sun and the existence of the moon, which demonstrate the power of the Creator, signifying hope and enlightenment. At the same time, it is a call for hope and action directed at the Muslim nation. After centuries of decline and darkness, Iqbal heralds that the Islamic world will rise again and return to its former glory, just as the sun rises anew every morning. This is a message to take action by discovering the power and heritage within themselves, rather than waiting for salvation to come from outside. The

themes of Muhammad Iqbal's poem are the existence, unity, order and power of Allah:

Open your eyes, look at the world, look at the sky, look at space. کھول آنکھ زمین دیکھ فلک دیکھ فضا دیکھ!

Look at the moon rising in the east (Iqbal, 2013: 154). مشرق سے ابھرتے ہوئے سورج کو ذرا دیکھ! (Iqbal, 2012: 236)

Iqbal desired the revival of the spirit of powerful states that served Islam, such as the Ghaznavids and Seljuks, and invited Muslims to advance in science, art, and spirituality. Referring to the dynamism of Islam, Iqbal emphasized that the ummah should be in constant motion and renewal, not stagnant. At the same time, Iqbal mentioned his longing for the days when Islamic civilization was at its peak in science, philosophy, and thought. He also noted that Islamic civilization was not limited to its own borders, but carried knowledge and enlightenment to the world. In this work, the poet specifically included the influence of Muslim intellectuals on medieval Europe in the fields of philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and art:

Sanjar and Saleem are reflections of His glory and splendor, شوکتِ سنجر و سلیم تیرے جلال کی نمود

While Junayd and Bayazid's poverty are proof of His beauty! فقرِ جُنید و بایزید تیرا جمال ہے نقاب

The world is utterly dark, even with the sun in orbit! تیرہ و تار ہے جہاں گردشِ آفتاب سے

Refresh its soul with Your unveiled manifestation! (Iqbal, 2013: 130). طبعِ زمانہ تازہ کر جلوہ ہے حجاب سے (Iqbal, 2012: 191)

The Ghaznavids played an active role in the spread of Islam in India. The poet states that there is no longer a leader who serves Islam. Iqbal expressed his hope that the spirit of conquest would return to the holy lands of the Islamic world. Similarly, referring to Arab and Persian culture, the poet emphasised that these cultures no longer produced original, creative ideas as they had in the past. He stated that there was no longer a leader in Muslim

society who was as brave, self-sacrificing and fought for the right cause as Hussein.:

Is there no more Ghaznavid in the house of life?

کیا نہیں اور غزنوی کارگہ حیات میں

The Somnates of the Harem have been waiting for so long!

بیٹھے ہیں کب سے منتظر اہل حرم کے
!سومنات

Neither in the Arab's burning words nor in the Persian's lute

ذکر عرب کے سوز میں، فکر عجم کے
ساز میں

Is there any discovery peculiar to the Arabs, any idea peculiar to the Persians!

نے عربی مشاہدات، نے عجمی تخیلات

There is no more Hussein in the Hijaz caravan

قافلہ حجاز میں ایک حسین بھی نہیں

The bends of the Tigris and Euphrates are still the same as ever!
(Iqbal, 2013: 129).

گرچہ بے تاب دار ابھی گیسوئے دجلہ و
فرات

(Iqbal, 2012: 190)

In this poem, the poet refers to veterans as Allah's mysterious servants, expressing that their spiritual state, inner strength, and secrets of heroism are too sublime to be explained by worldly standards. By alluding to the story of Moses parting the sea with his staff, the poet elevates the veterans' power, likening it to a prophetic miracle. He emphasises that even the greatest obstacles will vanish in the face of the spiritual majesty of the veterans. Expressing a Sufi understanding, the poet relates them to the levels of sincerity and annihilation in God (fenafillah), based on the fact that they lived solely for the pleasure of Allah. He also mentions that veterans deeply feel muhabbetullah, or the love of Allah, in their hearts, according to Sufi terminology. He stated that they had completely detached themselves from worldly goals through martyrdom, which is considered the highest level of faith in Islamic creed and the highest form of union in Sufism. In the last line, he stated that veterans embraced the concept of asceticism by fighting only for the sake of Allah. Here, the poet uses the art of emphasis to reinforce the feelings of sincerity and fighting in the way of Allah that he used in the previous verses. In addition, throughout the poem, the poet uses

Spain, you are the guardian of
Muslim blood

ہسپانیہ تو خون مسلمان کا امیں ہے

You are pure as a Harem in my
eyes.

مانند حرم پاک ہے تو میری نظر میں

Traces of prostration are hidden
in your soil

پوشیدہ تری خاک میں سجدوں کے نشان
ہیں

Silent calls to prayer are recited
in the dawn breezes.

خاموش اذانیں ہیں تری باد سحر میں

Once upon a time, those who
pitched their tents at the foot of your
mountains

روشن تھیں ستاروں کی طرح ان کی
سنانیں

Their spears shone like stars.

خیمے تھے کبھی جن کے ترے کوہ و کمر
میں

Do your beauties need to be
adorned once more?

پھر تیرے حسینوں کو ضرورت ہے حنا
کی؟

The colour remains vivid in the
blood of my heart (Iqbal, 2013: 121).

باقی ہے ابھی رنگ مرے خون جگر میں
(Iqbal, 2012: 175-176)

The poet emphasises that Islamic civilisation did not remain confined within its own borders, but also brought knowledge and enlightenment to the entire world, particularly alluding to the influence of Muslim intellectuals such as Ibn Rushd and Ibn Sina in the fields of philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, medicine and art on medieval Europe. The most important purpose of Iqbal's characterisation of medieval Europe as dark is explained by its being under the pressure of scholastic thought in the pre-Renaissance period. Islamic thought, on the other hand, brought a rational perspective to these lands through scientific methodology:

Their foresight educated both
East and West,

جن کی نگاہوں نے کی تربیت شرق و
غرب

Their intellect guided Europe
through its dark ages.

ظلمت یورپ میں تھی جن کی خرد راہ ہیں

The same generation still exists in
Spain:

جن کے لہو کے طفیل آج بھی ہیں اندلسی

Their behaviour is warm, their
morals good, their countenance
beautiful (Iqbal, 2013: 115).

خوش دل و گرم اختلاط سادہ و روشن جبین
(Iqbal, 2012: 156)

The poet, who states that science supports the belief in one God in Islam, has mentioned that both science and Sufism, albeit through their own distinct paths, bear witness to the existence of God, affirming that there is no true deity besides Him. However, while science perceives the true Creator in the outward (external) realm, Sufism possesses the awareness to perceive its own truth at an inward (inner) level. Both partake in the knowledge of Allah (marifet), but he emphasised that their paths to reaching Him are different:

The “present” of science is one
thing, the “present” of poverty is
another

علم کا موجود اور فقر کا موجود اور

Both declare, “I bear witness that
there is no god but God.” (Iqbal,
2013: 94).

اشہد ان لا الہ اشہد ان لا الہ
(Iqbal, 2012: 126)

In his poem, which highlights the contrast between the grandeur of the past and the corruption of the present, the poet refers to the loss of quality in spiritual institutions such as madrasah and dergahs, and the emergence of unqualified individuals within these institutions. He expresses that today we lack leaders equipped with the qualities of humility, patience, responsibility, and the ability to guide their people, such as Moses:

The madrasah that nurtured lions
and sultans

تھا جہاں مدرسہ شیریں و شاپنشاہی

Today produces only foxes.

آج ان خانقہوں میں ہے فقط روباہی

That shepherding, the beginning
of the Kalimullah

نظر آئی نہ مجھے قافلہ سالاروں میں

Is nowhere to be seen in the

وہ شبانی کہ ہے تمہید کلیم اللہی

leaders of the caravan.

There is no longer any sweetness
in the song for the beautiful-voiced
bird

لذت نغمہ کہاں مرغ خوش الحان کے لیے

In that garden where its breath
does not accompany it (Iqbal, 2013:
92).

آہ اس باغ میں کرتا ہے نفس کوتاہی
(Iqbal, 2012: 124)

The poet, who depicted his era as a world where people pursued material values, false gods, and idols, contrasted this with the figure of Prophet Ibrahim, a symbol of the belief in monotheism who defended the existence and unity of Allah. He expressed that standing against materialistic values is only possible with a self that is bound to truth:

The world is an idol house, but
Khalil Ibrahim is a man of truth.

صنم کدہ ہے جہاں اور مرد حق ہے خلیل

This secret point exists only in la-
ilah (Iqbal, 2013: 83).

یہ نکتہ وہ ہے کہ پوشیدہ لا الہ میں ہے
(Iqbal, 2012: 114)

The poet stated that the education he received from leading Western universities such as Munich and Cambridge was technologically adequate but not satisfying in terms of spiritual pleasures. Expressing the void in Western rational thought, the poet emphasised that the solution could be found in the roots of Islam. Longing for the past, the poet expressed that we are living in a period where spiritual consciousness has been lost and spiritual quests have become difficult. As the answer to the spiritual quest, he pointed to the Kaaba, the symbol of monotheism, submission and divine love. Furthermore, the poet brings together the history of the prophets and important figures of Islam with the story of the Kaaba. He states that Islam and the spirit of tawhid began with the submission of Prophet Ishmael and reached its peak with the sacrifice of Imam Hussein. It is also emphasised that Islam is not merely a belief system, but also embodies submission, resistance, and self-sacrifice:

The lessons I learned in Europe
remain in my memory to this day

مجھے وہ درس فرنگ آج یاد آتے ہیں

Where is the sweetness of inner
peace; where is the obscuring
evidence.

کہاں حضور کی لذت کہاں حجاب دلیل

The night is dark and you have
strayed from the caravan

اندھیری شب ہے جدا اپنے قافلے سے ہے
تو

My fiery flame is a beacon for
you.

ترے لیے ہے مرا شعلہ نوا قندیل

The story of the Kaaba is
intriguing, simple and colourful;

غریب و سادہ و رنگین ہے داستان حرم

Its endpoint is Hussein, its
beginning is Ismail (Iqbal, 2013: 77).

نہایت اس کی حسین ابتدا ہے اسماعیل
(Iqbal, 2012: 106)

Love, which appears before us as a human emotion, is defined in Sufism as the door to divine truth. In this sense, love is accepted as a means for the servant to know his own self. Here, Iqbal states that love is a means first to know oneself and then to know Allah. The poet, symbolising man's servitude with the concept of slavery, mentions that divine love elevates the servant's status. At the same time, Iqbal emphasises the universality of love by referring to great Sufis and scholars. Attar and Mevlana are sufi poets who focus on love, while Razi and Ghazali are thinkers who emphasise knowledge and reason. Nevertheless, the poet states that reaching the truth cannot be achieved without love. Referring to the dawn, a time of blessing for worship, remembrance and contemplation, the poet implies that the seeker of truth advances on this path with hardship and patience. Hz. Ali appears in Islamic tradition as a symbol of courage and knowledge. The poet depicts a person who has detached himself from worldly affairs and possessions as someone following the path of Ali. The poet states that the poor are superior to the great rulers who have reigned over the world, such as the Persian King Darius and Alexander the Great. Muhammad Iqbal expresses, in a philosophical and literary style, the nature of servitude that transforms into freedom and the fact that truth is gained through arduous paths:

When love teaches a person the
path to self-knowledge

جب عشق سکھاتا ہے آداب خود آگاہی

Slaves become privy to the secrets of sovereignty.

کھلتے ہیں غلاموں پر اسرار شہابینش

Whether Attar, Rumi, Razi, or Ghazali

عطارؒ بو رومیؒ بو رازیؒ بو غزالیؒ بو

Nothing is attained without supplication in the early dawn.

کچھ باتھ نہیں آتا ہے آہ سحرگاہی

The dervish who carries the scent of Allah's Lion in his poverty

دارا و سکندر سے وہ مرد فقیر اولیٰ

Is more noble than Dara and Alexander (Iqbal, 2013: 69).

بو جس کی فقیری میں ہوئے اسد اللہی
(Iqbal, 2012: 97)

Iqbal has mentioned that when a person is truly connected to God, they will be liberated from worldly ties and will be exalted, while those who bow to worldly possessions, fame, and their own desires will remain slaves. In this poem, the poet, who longs for the past, expresses that values such as dignity, justice, and courage, which were once characteristic of Muslims, have now been lost. The poet states that the spiritual strength of Muslims once deeply affected people's hearts, but that this is no longer the case today. The poet calls for a revival, inviting Muslims to return to monotheism, love, poverty and heroic stances:

This servitude is dominion, that servitude is begging;

یہ بندگی خدائی وہ بندگی گدائی

Be either a servant of Allah or a servant of the world.

یا بندہ خدا بن یا بندہ زمانہ

O heir of La-ilah! You no longer possess

اے لا الہ کے وارث باقی نہیں ہے تجھ میں

Heart-stirring speech, a formidable character.

گفتار دلبرانہ کردار قابرانہ

Hearts trembled at your gaze

تیری نگاہ سے دل سینوں میں کانپتے تھے

Your dervish-like charm is now
lost (Iqbal, 2013: 67).

کھویا گیا ہے تیرا جذب قلندرانہ
(Iqbal, 2012: 94)

In Islam, it is stated that a true believer who believes with their heart and reflects this belief in their life will attain the maturity of dervishhood as well as the rank of kingship. The poet emphasises that a mature believer will not remain indifferent to worldly affairs and must guide society with the spiritual depth they have attained. The poet emphasised that the source of the true believer's power lies not in weapons but in their inner spiritual strength and faith. In this vein, Iqbal stated that spiritual power and trust in Allah give the strength to fight, indicating that they are superior to physical strength. The poet states that a believer constructs his destiny with his will and effort, with God's approval, rather than passively awaiting his fate:

If one is a Muslim, neither
kingship nor dervishhood matters,

کافر ہے مسلمان تو نہ شاہی نہ فقیری

If one is a believer, a Muslim
dervish can also be a king.

مومن ہے تو کرتا ہے فقیری میں بھی شاہی

If one is an unbeliever, that
servant relies only on his sword

کافر ہے تو شمشیر پہ کرتا ہے بھروسا

If one is a believer, he fights as a
soldier even without a sword.

مومن ہے تو ہے تیغ بھی لڑتا ہے سپاہی

If one is an unbeliever, he is
bound by fate

کافر ہے تو ہے تابع تقدیر مسلمان

If one is a believer, he is divine
providence itself (Iqbal, 2013: 47).

مومن ہے تو وہ آپ ہے تقدیر الہی
(Iqbal, 2012: 66)

In his poem, which captures the spiritual and moral beauty of Islam, Iqbal describes compassion, mercy and tolerance as a transformation wrought by Islam within the individual's inner world. This transformation compels people to guide others and call them to the right path. Muhammad Iqbal referred to those who fought in the way of Allah, and who were also engaged in a spiritual struggle against ignorance, oppression, immorality, and selfishness, as ghazis (warriors), and stated that being compassionate,

merciful, and tolerant was at the heart of their mission. It is stated that the ghazis fighting for this cause should win not only the hearts of Muslims but also the hearts of all humanity, and that all this should be done not through coercion but through compassion and winning hearts. The poet emphasises that Islam is a religion of compassion and mercy that encompasses all humanity:

Kindness is in the blood of Muslims,
مسلمان کے لہو میں ہے سلیقہ دل نوازی کا

And this trait of the warriors of the righteous path is universal (Iqbal, 2013: 43).
مروت حسن عالم گیر ہے مردان غازی کا
(Iqbal, 2012: 59)

Conclusion

Muhammad Iqbal's poems contain not only aesthetic elements but also solutions to the problems faced by Muslim societies in the modern era. In the 20th century, when this book was published, Muslim societies were experiencing political and cultural turmoil. Iqbal advised Muslim societies experiencing political and identity crises during this period not to remain passive but to be constantly active. The symbols, connotations and historical references in the work reconnect the Muslim individual with their roots while also instilling hope and courage for the future. In his work *Gabriel's Wing*, Muhammad Iqbal expresses his admiration for Islamic civilisation and his longing for the past. In his poems, Iqbal refers to the superiority of the Islamic world in the fields of science, art and philosophy throughout history, stating that this civilisation must re-emerge. The longing for the splendour of the past is not merely a nostalgic attitude in his works, but also carries the characteristic of a social and cultural exhortation. Iqbal has emphasised that Muslim societies must remember their own intrinsic values and rebuild them in line with the requirements of the age.

The significant figures and contributions of the past provide readers with historical awareness and also serve as an invitation to Muslim individuals to realise their own potential. In his poems, which capture the spiritual and moral beauty of Islam, Iqbal emphasises that compassion, mercy and tolerance are a transformation created by Islam within the individual's inner world, and that Islam is not merely a belief system, but also represents submission, resistance and self-sacrifice.

Muhammad Iqbal's work, *Gabriel's Wing*, is significant in that it contains solutions to the problems faced by Muslim individuals in the modern world, as well as his views on Islam, its historical background, and the values of the past. Iqbal, who explores Eastern and Western thought in his works, mentions Muslim leaders in the fields of literature, science and art, as well as states that experienced their golden age in Islam, in this work, establishing himself as a guide in the Islamic world not only as a good poet and philosopher but also as a spiritual leader.

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